

BY FAX/SPEED POST

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA
NIRVACHAN SADAN, ASHOKA ROAD, NEW DELHI-110001.

No. 464/INST/2008-EPS

Dated: 24th October, 2008

To

The Chief Electoral Officers of
All States and Union Territories

Subject:- Preparation of District Election Plan - Regarding

Sir,

I am directed to state that the Commission has been issuing instructions regarding poll management from time to time. The past experience shows that having a proper and timely district election plan helps the administration in many ways to manage the elections effectively in free, fair and peaceful manner. Therefore, all officers connected with elections should familiarize/acquaint themselves with each measure to be taken at various stages of election process with reference to the Commission's existing instructions/directions and also updated provisions of the R.P.Act, 1951 & Rules made thereunder. More specifically, the District Election Officers should prepare a District Election Plan listing out detailed arrangements for the poll well in advance, particularly on the following items: -

1. District Profile:

Prepare a district profile giving the following -

- 1.1 Important Officials and their contact numbers.
- 1.2 Geography.
- 1.3 Demography.
- 1.4 Administrative Units (including constituencies).
- 1.5 General Law & Order, History of District -Constituency specific - to the extent possible.
- 1.6 Past Electoral offences - action taken against each of them and list of pending cases.

2. Elector Details :

2.1 Sex ratio :

Provide information in Format 1B & 1C and provide explanation as in footnote to the format 1B & 1C.

- 2.2 **Voter – Population Ratio**
Provide information in Form 2C and as explained in footnote of 2C, provide information for each of the constituency within the administrative jurisdiction of the DEO.
- 2.3 **Inclusion and Deletion**
Provide information in Format 3B and 3C
- 2.4 **EPIC Coverage**
Provide information in format 5B and 5C.

3. Polling Stations :

- 3.1 Basic details on polling stations e.g. constituency-wise no. of polling stations, nos. of polling locations, polling stations categorized by no. of Voters etc.
- 3.2 Special information on polling stations like list of polling station nos. accessible by vehicle, their distance from road head; list of polling stations without telephone lines (telephone nos. against each polling station).
- 3.3 Vulnerable Villages/Hamlets: Provide a list of vulnerable villages/Hamlets in Format 8. The vulnerable Hamlets/villages have to be identified in accordance with Commission's instructions on the subject.

4. Logistic Plan:

- 4.1 **Polling personnel**
Assess the manpower requirement at various levels for appointment as polling personnel like sector/zonal magistrate, presiding officer, polling officer etc. For the purpose, particulars of officers/officials working in the Central/State Govt. Offices, PSUs etc. based in the Districts have to be obtained and compiled in electronic database. Please provide the basic details category-wise in terms of number of eligible personnel available in district; no. of personnel (Dept.-wise entered in electronic database) and no. of personnel actually required.

5. Movement Plan :

- 5.1 **Sector Movement Plan**
Draw a plan of movement of polling parties/security forces, sector offices indicating sectors covering polling booths/polling centres, with detailed route-chart with physical and time distance. Mention whether route is metalled or *kachcha*. Provide a sketch map of constituency showing the sector routes in different columns and Polling Station No. also marked thereon.

5.2 Requirements of vehicles etc.

Assess the requirement of vehicles (buses, LMVs and heavy vehicles) for movement of polling parties and security forces deployed on poll and counting duties.

6. Police Deployment Plan:

Assess the requirement of police personnel (in various ranks) for Sectoral movement in the district and to man polling booths/polling centres. Prepare the return journey plan for polled EVMs/polling material, their storage and Security plan till counting.

7. Communication Plan:

Prepare list of landline telephones/cellular connections available in/nearby each of the polling station alongwith particulars of persons to be contacted. Also prepare list of polling personnel/sector/zonal magistrates with their cellular numbers. Plan mode of communication such as VHF/HF linkage to ensure connectivity with each polling booth on the day of poll where no landline/mobile telephone connection is available. Provide details thereof.

8. Counting Plan:

Identify the place(s) for storage of EVMs and polling material and also for counting of votes with reference to standing guidelines prescribed by the Commission. Furnish the proposal through Chief Electoral Officer for the counting centres so identified for the Commission's approval well in advance. Assess counting staff availability, detail other logistics arrangements for counting, media arrangements and security arrangements for counting centre.

9. Provision for Polling Staff Welfare

There shall be a separate chapter in the election arrangement booklet prepared by DEO/RO dedicated to the polling staff welfare. In this connection, attention is invited to the detailed guidelines contained in Commission's letter of even no. dated 12th September 2008.

The receipt of this letter may please be acknowledged with the confirmation that the relevant instructions have been issued to all the concerned officers. It should be clarified that the above are only indicative topics/items for the detailed district election plan. A copy of instructions/directions so issued in this behalf may also be endorsed to the Commission for its information and record.

Yours faithfully,

(SHANGARA RAM)
PRINCIPAL SECRETARY

Election Plan For a Constituency

Step 1

Collect information on total number of polling stations (parts) in a constituency.

Step 2

Organize and classify them as ‘rural area polling stations’ and ‘urban area polling stations’. For classifying ‘urban area polling stations’ take the 7 corporation area, all the district head quarters and established city like towns for example Morvi, etc. Very small towns with semi-rural characteristics should not be taken as urban area polling stations.

Step 3

For **urban area polling stations**, collect the information on number of buildings (locations) in which these polling stations are located. Organize the information under following columns:

- number of locations (buildings) with 1 to 3 polling station;
- number of locations (buildings) with 4 to 6 polling station;
- number of locations (buildings) with 7 to 8 polling station;
- number of locations (buildings) with 9 to 12 polling station; and
- number of locations (buildings) with 13 to 16 polling station;

Step 4

Plot these locations on a map showing the approach road and route to these locations.

Step 5

Organize these locations into clusters (Sectors). One cluster ideally should not have more than 8 locations. The minimum can even be one location if that location has too many polling stations and has other sensitivities like not easily accessible or law and order problem prone area etc.

The cluster (Sector) formation is an important task and needs care. Most important care to be taken is that all the polling station locations of one cluster should fall on one common road route. Economy of time and ease of access is prime criteria. A circular route is ideal; however it may not always be possible.

Another care required is that polling station locations within a cluster should not be at a greater distance than an hour. In other words, all polling stations of a cluster can be visited within one hour at the most. The lesser the time taken, the better it would be.

Step 6

Repeat step 3 & 4 & 5 for **rural area polling stations**. For rural area however the number of locations covered in one sector can be more. The time distance for coverage can be upto 2 hours.

Step 7

Compile and put the information in the following format for each constituency of your district.

Data for constituency level election planning

Sector Management

Each Sector (cluster) shall be put under a responsible sector officer. For the purpose, the best of the officers should be identified and database created. They may be drawn from all permissible departments of preferably the state, and where possible, central governments. They should be provided with a vehicle and fuel and should extensively familiarize themselves with every nook and corner of their jurisdiction i.e. the polling locations as well as the catchment area of the polling stations.

The Sector Officers will be specifically responsible for the following:

About Polling Location under him/her:

Ascertaining the approach and accessibility (road, bridges, culverts) to polling locations

Ascertaining the infrastructure at the polling locations viz. ramp, water, toilet, telephone number if any etc

Ascertaining Physical condition of the structure where polling is supposed to take place like, the roof, the walls, electricity etc of the polling booth/room

Since this will mean extensive touring of his area, the Sector Officer should also report on observance of the Model Code of Conduct in his jurisdiction. He should especially keep an eye and report on movement of unauthorized campaign vehicles, defacement of properties, campaigning beyond permitted hours, misuse of public building for campaign purposes, misuse of government vehicles.

About the voters served by the polling locations under him/her:

The catchment area (wards/locality or villages/hamlets) covered by each polling station

Generate awareness about the functionality of EVMs amongst voters of each polling station (demonstrate how it works)

Give specific Information to voters under his jurisdiction about their EPIC coverage programme

Inform voters about the helpline numbers and location of their polling stations where they have to vote

About vulnerability mapping:

During their 'voter contact programme' the sector officers shall also ascertain apprehensions if any of the voters, especially the minority community voters, dalits, tribals and backwards

The Sector Officer shall also attempt to collect the names of trouble mongers as perceived by the vulnerable inhabitants in confidence and give the information in Format 8 to the RO/DEO without having to disclose the source.

In every vulnerable population or settlement (hamlet/pocket etc) of the voters in his/her jurisdiction, the sector officer shall identify a nodal contact person/family of that community, obtain the contact number (if he/she has) and leave his own mobile number for contact by them in any emergency. The sector officer will make frequent visit to such identified pockets and hold meetings with vulnerable population in their hamlets as confidence building measure.

On the poll eve:

The sector officer shall be responsible for ensuring that the Polling team and all the materials/equipment has reached the polling stations. He will report any missing team/member of a team to the RO immediately

The sector officer shall also be responsible for reporting that the Force Deployed according to the plan has reached the polling stations

On Poll Day:

Sector Officer will visit all the polling stations during the first two hours of poll and give the poll commencement report to the RO for polling stations under his jurisdiction

Sector Officer will ensure replacement of any EVM that would not operate for whatsoever reason at the start and during the poll hours

Thereafter the Sector Officer will oscillate between his polling stations and make himself available/contactable to every Presiding Officer under his jurisdiction and ensure that the poll is conducted in a free and fair manner and without interruptions

Sector officer will ensure that there is no obstruction to any of the vulnerable pockets/population identified earlier in approaching the polling station and casting of votes. Any such thing shall be reported to the RO immediately

Sector Officer will give an OK report on conduct of poll in polling stations under his jurisdiction

Sector Officer will safely escort and get deposited the polled EVMs at designated counters.

In order that the Sector Officers are able to carry out their duties smoothly, the following arrangements should be made for them:

Best officers available within the district will have to be hand picked

Elaborate training of sector officers

Wherever possible, they should be declared magistrates on duty

They should be provided with a vehicle and sufficient fuel. This should be provided well in advance, as soon as possible but not later than one week before the gazette notification

A videographer with him to monitor any breach of the Model Code of Conduct

A route map of his sector, giving the broad layout and location of polling stations falling in his sector (It could be a sketch map, need not be a scale map)

Polling part's detail viz the voter roll with hamlets name etc for him to be able to contact some voters of every section in the part;

An EVM for awareness of and demonstration before the voters (This can be given by rotation and a programme for each sector officer should be drawn up so that each sector officer gets it for 2-3 days)

On poll day, the urban sector officers will move with $\frac{1}{2}$ section of CPMF in same vehicle

The RO/DEO should take weekly review with all Sector Officers to monitor the works done by them as well as to review the action taken by officers/departments concerned on the reports (shortcomings) pointed in Sector Officer's reports.